

Operating Guidelines for **Home Caterers**



Thunder Bay District
Health Unit
www.tbdhu.com



Home Catering Guidelines

Environmental Health Department

If you operate a home catering business in the District of Thunder Bay, the following guideline must be followed.

- A.** Your home/business will be inspected once or twice per year. The Health Unit requires a letter from you indicating that you have no objection to a Public Health Inspector entering your home at any reasonable time for the purpose of conducting Health Unit business.
- B.** It is strongly recommended that you take the Thunder Bay District Health Unit's Level 1 Safe Foodhandling course or the In Good Hands on-line course.
- C.** Contact your local municipal office or municipal licensing department for information on the business licence that may apply to your operation.
- D.** If you operate at a Farmer's Market or Special Event, please contact the Health Unit for information on other guidelines that may apply.

FOOD SAFETY (see page 10 for definitions)

- 1.** Potentially hazardous foods are to be maintained at an internal temperature of 4°C (40°F) or lower or 60°C (140°F) or higher.
- 2.** Frozen foods are to be maintained at an internal temperature of -18°C (0°F) or lower.
- 3.** All meat and meat products, poultry, milk and dairy products, and eggs must be government inspected and/or come from a government-inspected source. Proof of this may be requested at any time.

4. Grade C and/or ungraded eggs are not to be used. Only grade A eggs are permitted. The use of raw eggs in foods that will not be cooked (i.e. salad dressing, meringue, home-made mayonnaise) is strongly discouraged. A pasteurized egg product could be used as a substitute in recipes that call for raw eggs.

5. Frozen foods are to be defrosted in a refrigerator or under cold running water or in a microwave. If using a microwave, the food must be cooked or reheated immediately after thawing.

6. Probe thermometers are to be used to verify internal food temperatures.

7. Foods are to be cooked according to the following chart:

Final Internal Cooking Temperatures (Using A Probe Thermometer)		
Temperatures must be maintained for a minimum of 15 seconds		
Poultry Whole poultry Individual pieces	82°C 74°C	180°F 165°F
Mixtures Containing poultry, egg, meat, fish or other hazardous food	74°C	165°F
Beef & Veal Hamburger, deboned and rolled roasts	71°C	160°F
Pork All products	71°C	160°F
Lamb Ground, deboned and rolled roasts	71°C	160°F
Fish All products	70°C	168°F
Eggs	63°C	145°F

8. Hot food must be cooled from 60°C (140°F) to 20°C (68°F) within 2 hours and from 20°C (68°F) to 4°C (40°F) within 4 hours. When cooling large batches or pieces of food:

- Break or cut the food up into smaller pieces.
- Divide large batches into several smaller ones.
- Stir the foods as they cool.
- Place food in shallow pans and/or an ice water bath.
- **Never put extremely hot foods in a refrigerator!**

9. Reheat all foods to their original cook temperature.

Water and Ice

1. A constant supply of hot and cold running water, under pressure, is to be provided at all times.
2. Water must be potable (free from bacteria). For those homes not provided with water from a municipal source, water should be sampled on a regular basis.
3. Ice must be made from potable water.

Refrigeration

1. Adequate refrigerator storage space must be provided so that all high risk foods are stored at an internal temperature of 4°C (40°F) or lower or in the freezer at an internal temperature of -18°C (0°F) or lower.
2. Refrigerators and freezers must be equipped with accurate indicating thermometers.

Food Transportation and Storage

1. Transport foods quickly from place to place. Use thermal insulated containers with hot packs to maintain hot foods at an internal temperature of 60°C (140°F) or higher. Use thermal insulated containers with cold/ice packs to maintain cold foods at an internal temperature of 4°C (40°F) or lower. Containers must be equipped with an accurate indicating thermometer.
2. Foods are to be covered during transportation and storage to protect them from dust, dirt, insects and other foreign objects.
3. Food is to be transported and stored in food-grade containers that are not used for any other purpose.
4. Food must be stored on shelves located at least 15 cm (6 in.) off the floor.
5. Containers should prohibit the entrance of insects and rodents.
6. It is strongly recommended that samples of food prepared for large functions be kept for seven days. 200 grams of all solid foods and 125 mL of all liquid foods should be labelled, dated and stored in a freezer.

Labelling

1. All foods that are sold in a packaged form are to be labelled with the home caterer's name and the date the food was prepared.
2. For information about ingredient labelling, contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) at 1-800-667-2657 or on-line at www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/guide/toce.shtml for information regarding ingredient labelling.

Foodhandlers

1. Foodhandlers are to be clean and wear clean outer garments.
2. Foodhandlers are not to smoke while handling or preparing food.
3. Hair is to be confined.
4. Foodhandlers must be free from infectious agents that may be spread through food or water.
5. Foodhandlers are to wash their hands whenever necessary.

Please refer to page 7 for handwashing instructions.

Sink Requirements

1. One sink in the food preparation area is to be provided for hand washing. It is only to be used for hand washing and must have adequate supplies of liquid soap and paper towels in dispensers at all times.
2. All pots and pans, baking dishes, utensils, etc., are to be washed and sanitized in either:
 - A dishwasher with chlorine based detergent set at the highest temperature setting for washing and drying
 - OR
 - A two-compartment sink where dishes are washed in the first sink, rinsed under hot running water and sanitized in the second.

Please refer to page 8 for dishwashing instructions.

HANDWASHING



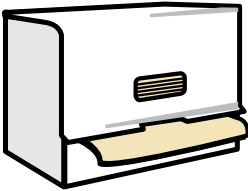
1. WET HANDS



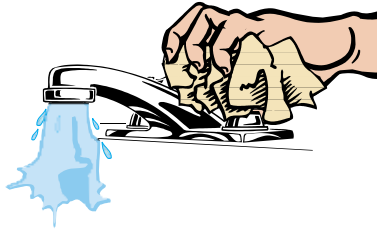
2. SOAP / LATHER (20 seconds)



3. RINSE



4. TOWEL DRY



5. TURN OFF TAP WITH TOWEL

ALWAYS wash your hands before:

- Handling ready-to-eat foods
- Starting work
- Preparing food
- Eating
- Handling clean utensils, silverware and plates

ALWAYS wash your hands after:

- Handling raw foods, especially meat and poultry
- Eating or smoking
- Taking out the garbage
- Cleaning food preparation areas (surfaces, equipment, plates and utensils)
- Cleaning washrooms
- Sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose
- Going to the washroom
- Touching your hair, face or body
- Touching anything else that may contaminate hands (including money)

IF IN DOUBT, WASH YOUR HANDS!

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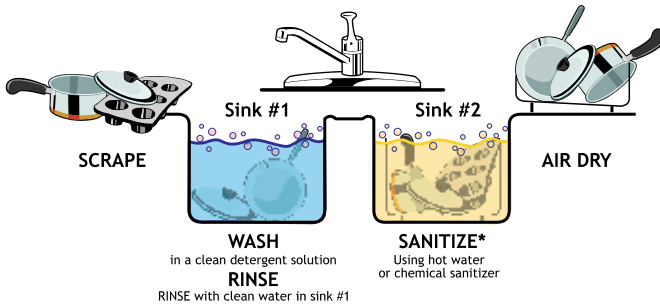
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DISHWASHING

Dishwashing - 2 sink method

For Pots, Pans and Cooking Utensils



*Sanitize using hot water:

- Dishes must be immersed in hot water (77°C) for 45 seconds

OR

*Sanitize using chemical sanitizers:

- Water temperature for chemical sanitizing must be 24°C (75°F).
- Sanitize for 45 seconds.
- NEVER mix chemicals. Combining chemicals is toxic!

- Use one of the following chemical sanitizers, and measure it correctly!

Chlorine ("bleach"): 100 ppm (1 oz per gallon of water)

Iodine: 25 ppm (0.25 oz per gallon of water)

Quaternary Ammonium ("Quats"): 200 ppm (2 oz per gallon of water)

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Cleaning and Maintenance

1. Food preparation and storage areas are to be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner.
2. Floors and floor coverings in the food preparation area are to be tight, smooth and non-absorbent. Floors are to be kept clean and be kept in good repair.
3. Any equipment, including pots and pans, utensils and work surfaces, is to be of sound and tight construction, kept in good repair, be corrosion resistant, non-toxic and be free from cracks and crevices.
4. Equipment must be made of material that can be readily cleaned and sanitized.
5. Cloths used for cleaning must be stored in a container of sanitizing solution. The solution is to be changed frequently and cloths laundered when they become soiled. A mixture of 2 tablespoons of household bleach in 4 litres of water makes a good sanitizer.
6. No pets are to be permitted in the food preparation area.
7. Garbage and wastes are to be removed as often as necessary.
8. Washrooms are to be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner. A supply of liquid soap in a pump dispenser and paper towel is to be provided; bar soap is **not** permitted.
9. Smoking is not permitted in any area where food is prepared or stored.

Definitions

Government inspected/government inspected source — the food and/or establishment has been inspected by an official government agency i.e. Thunder Bay District Health Unit

Cleaning — the physical removal of dirt, soil and grease, typically carried out with soap/detergent, water and a scrubbing action

Food grade — corrosion-resistant, non-toxic, non-absorbent containers safe for storing food in (ie plastic, stainless steel, glass)

Food premises — any place where food is prepared, sold or served or eaten

Hazardous food — any food that is capable of supporting the growth or survival of disease causing micro-organisms or their toxins

High risk food — any food that is capable of supporting the growth or survival of disease causing micro-organisms or their toxins

Home caterer — any person who prepares or handles food in his or her home with the intention of providing it to the public

Internal temperature — internal (inside) temperature of food

Micro-organism — any organism too small to be viewed by the unaided eye, such as bacteria and viruses

Low risk food — any food that it is not normally capable of supporting the growth or survival of illness causing micro-organisms or their toxins

Pre-packaged food — food that is packaged at an approved food premises other than the premises where it is offered for sale

Probe (instant read) thermometer — a thermometer that can be easily inserted into foods to verify food preparation and storage temperatures

Utensil — any article used in the preparation or handling of food

Sanitize (sanitized, sanitizing) — the reduction in number of disease-causing micro-organisms, typically carried out with a chlorine and water solution (1 part chlorine to 10 parts of water)

Food and water samples may be taken at the discretion of the Public Health Inspector.

Questions relating to these guidelines should be directed to:

**Environmental Health Department
Thunder Bay District Health Unit
1-888-294-6630, ext. 5926, 625-5926**

